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8. ADDITIONAL SIGHT RECORDS OF SLENDERBILLED GULL *LARUS GENEI* FROM GUJARAT

The slenderbilled gull *Larus genei* Breme is considered to be a winter visitor to the west coast, west to Sindh, Gujarat and Bombay (Ali and Ripley 1983). Except for one specimen collected by Dharmakumarsinhji (1955) near Bhavnagar, the species was not recorded either from Kachchh (Palin and Lester 1904, Ali 1945) or from mainland Gujarat. However, Mundkur *et al.* (1988) have reported sighting of the species from several locations around the Gulf of Kachchh and opined that it is a common winter visitor there.

We too have seen this species at several places in fairly good numbers around the Gulf of Kachchh (Table 1). We have also recorded it repeatedly from Porbander (east coast of Saurashtra) and Bhavnagar (Gulf of Khambat), suggesting that it is common on the Gujarat coast in general. This supports the views of Mundkur *et al.* (1988).

At Jakhau, the slenderbilled gull along with the lesser blackbacked gull *Larus fuscus* and herring gull *Larus argentatus* was seen resting and occasionally feeding on the fishes drying on

TABLE I
RECORDS OF SLENDERBILLED GULL FROM
GUJARAT COAST

S. No.	Site	No. of birds	Date
1.	Narayan Sarovar	50	26.ix.1992
2.	Jakhau	5000	25.ix.1992
3.	Surajbari	4	4.x.1991
4.	Pirotan Island	A few	8.iii.1980
5.	Charakla Salt Pans	129	28.xii.1996
6.	Okha	2	28.xii.1996
7.	Harshad Dam	2	30.xii.1996
8.	Porbander Bird Sanctuary	3	2.iv.1996
9.	Porbander Bird Sanctuary	6	31.xii.1996
10.	Porbander Salt Pans	6	27.iv.1997
11.	Porbander Salt Pans	36	15.vi.1997
12.	Bhavnagar Port	2	31.xii.1995

the ground. At Narayan Sarovar, the birds were seen flying above the creek. At Charakla salt pans, they were swimming along with blacknecked grebes *Podiceps nigricollis*. At Porbander, the birds were seen both in the sanctuary area and salt pans. Records of this gull during April and June at Porbander also support the view of Mundkur *et al.* (1988) that it may be nesting within our limits, or that the non-

breeding individuals tend to stay over within our limits.

The available data and our own intensive studies on the coast of Gujarat suggest that the gull is quite abundant on the Gulf of Kachchh, but not so on the Gulf of Khambat. One of us (Parasharya 1984) studied the coastal avifauna near Bhavnagar and Ghogha during 1979 to 1983, but had seen it only once. It is possible that the species was overlooked because of its similarities with the blackheaded gull *Larus ridibundus* in winter plumage (Ali and Ripley 1983, Mundkur *et al.* 1988). Hence, a careful survey of the Gulf of Khambat might yield a few more sightings.

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9. MULTIPLE BROODING OF THE LITTLE BROWN DOVE *STREPTOPELIA SENEGALENSIS*

An instance of multiple brooding by a pair of little brown doves, *Streptopelia senegalensis* Linn. and their incubation rhythm was observed in Bharatpur, Rajasthan, India in 1987-1988. Though multiple brooding is reported in most of the columbids (Westmoreland *et al.* 1986) including *Streptopelia senegalensis* (Ali and Ripley 1983), frequent and continuous brooding by *Streptopelia senegalensis* is so far not reported. The little brown dove reportedly raises two or more broods (Ali and Ripley 1983).

Columbids produce food (crop milk) for the young nestlings *in vivo* and feed older nestlings a diverse diet of seeds. Thus, breeding need not be synchronized with the availability of a particular food. The resultant protracted

breeding season has led to a propensity for multiple brooding. Predation, probably, is of secondary importance in the evolution of columbid reproductive strategy (Westmoreland *et al.* 1986).

A pair of little brown doves was observed attempting nest construction over an electric bulb hidden behind a stone pillar on the verandah of my house. The adult birds brought the nesting materials for three days, but could not succeed as there was nothing to hold the nesting materials intact. To help them, I made a cup-like structure with split bamboo sticks and tied it above the electric bulb. Being disturbed, the birds moved to the neighbouring garden about 10 m away and made a nest in a *Capparis sepiaria* bush. Later,